

Steam Ship Atlantic
Off Fortress Monroe, Nov. 14th 1862

Dear Father & Mother,

You must thought it strange that we do not write but it is nothing strange to me because we ~~were~~ are both out of stamps and money, and that is the case with most of the boys. We expected to get our pay before we left camp Belger but [CO] did not, we will have to wait some time before we ~~will~~ get it now. Lieut. Searl told me this morning that I could send a letter without a stamp by letting him write "Soldiers letter" on the envelope and then you [CO] could pay the postage when you get so I thought it would be well to ~~write~~ do so.

We left camp Belger a week ago last Wednesday and got aboard of this ship, we started the next day and got about ten miles from Baltimore and run on to a sand bar, we were there just a week before they could move her. They had to take off to hundred tons of her load and the soldiers, 1300 in number, and then they hitched on three steamboats and three steam tugs before they could move her. We started out 5 o'clk and arrived here at noon the next day.

Yesterday we were taken ashore to give our blankets and clothes on [?] we *staid* on shore till night.

I see the big gun "Union" and the *the* Lincoln gun and also the big gun Thunder, they are monsters I tell you. I see the gun boat Cumberland, the one that was sunk by the Merrimac, they have her raised and [CO] took the engine and masts out and she is used for a Hospital storehouse. I went into what the boys called it the "pill yard" they are larger pills them. I should care about taking but perhaps I shall get one, I [?]

The cannon ball yard I meant, there was a yard about us large as that down by Will's barn, full of ball of all sizes and shapes, they were piled in piles about four or five feet high, it was a big sight, we looked around the Fort till about dark when we got on board of a Steam boat and were taken back to the Atlantic. There is three companies of our Regt. on this vessel and the rest of them are up to Newport News, it about twelve miles from here up the James river, they say we are going up there to night or to morrow to stay about a week to give them a chance to fix the ship so they can get in a more

new and then we will start for some place or other, we don't know where ~~it is~~ we will go either to Mobile, Charleston or Texas, I think it will be to Texas, if we go up to Newport News, we will have a ~~chance~~ chance to see the mortar gun boat "Momiter(?)." Well, it is getting most time for the mail carrier to collect letters, and so I will have to stop. Harrison is well and send his respects to all. When you answer this, direct it to Washington and it will be forwarded to the Regt. and if you have plenty of stamps I wish you would put in a few.

Give my love to all.

Yours Affect.

J. F. Brand

I am well.